

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration is requested of all rejections based on 35 USC 112:

Examiner argues that the term “functional property”, which is used in our claim 3, is unclear since, after defining a functional property as one that is application related, no application for the recited compounds is given. This argument is not understood since it implies that no definition is valid unless it is accompanied by one or more examples. We also respectfully point out that we do not state in our specification that “the definition of a functional property is not precise”. What is stated there is “Functional properties are therefore harder to define but a definition must be provided for them to be meaningful”.

In the interests of receiving a timely Notice of Allowance, we have elected to amend claim 3 to provide a definition of “functional property” based on the list of specific functional properties that originally appeared in claim 4 (now canceled). Examiner had previously rejected claim 4 under 35 USC 103 (see discussion below).

Reconsideration is requested of all rejections based on 35 USC 103:

Examiner has rebutted our argument that “none of the cited processes, including Seyama’s process, includes the key novel feature of our claim 10 which is the use of a third feedstock as a sacrificial volume which, after sintering, is fully removed, as stated in the final clause of claim 10” by pointing to Seyama’s claim 7 as an example of the

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introduction of a third feedstock. While this is true, it is irrelevant since it says nothing about said third feedstock being later used as a sacrificial volume. On the contrary, in said claim 7 Seyama states "the injected third material and the second molded article together form a third molded article", thereby making it clear that the material derived from the third feedstock is retained in the final article and not sacrificed (so as to form a cavity).

Regarding the rejection of claim 4, examiner essentially repeats his argument that any physical property can be declared to be functional or not, depending on its intended application. This argument is now moot since we now explicitly define a functional property as one selected from the listed group. Whether or not a given functional property that contributes to the sum total of functional properties of the finished article is actually utilized by the finished article is irrelevant.

Applicant therefore respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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